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Thursday the 27. of *March*, 1655.

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# Communion vvith God.

# IN TWO SERMONS

## Preach'd at PAULS:

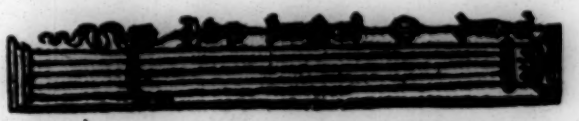
The firſt, Sept. 3. 1654.

The ſecond, March 25. 1655.

By SAMUEL ANNESLEY L. L. D. Miniſter of the Goſpel at JOHN *Evangel.* LONDON.

EPHES. 3. 19.

*That you might be filled with all the fulneſſe of God.*



*London.* Printed by *Evan Tyler*, and are to be ſold by *Nathanael Web* and *William Grantham*, at the ſigne of the *Black Bear* in *Pauls* Church-yard, 1655.

Andrews E 42 (4)

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To the Right Honourable

# CHRISTOPHER PACK,

LORD-MAYOR of *LONDON*,

And the Right VVorſhipfull ALDERMEN of the ſame Famous City.

*My Lord*,

S *you had nothing beſides the naked amiablenes of the ſubject, to render theſe Sermons acceptable, ſo I have nothing but my* Obedience *to Magiſtracy to preface their publication. Muſt I not by your eies ſee, & by your faith believe, theſe truths* thus clouded *in their diſcovery, profitable? But ſeeing you* Surpriſe *me with an* Order, *Give me leave to follow*

low your Order, further, then perhaps you thinke it leades me, and that is, to retort it back upon your own consciences.

Your commands (for such are your desires) (all superiours desires being commands enamel'd with humility) give a Solemn avouchment of the Truths you heard, and therefore if you do henceforth in the least depart from God, or preferre any thing, I speak the word againe. Any thing, before him, you transgresse not onely Gods laws, but your own, and such kind of Sinning against your own concessions, is more haynous then barely to sin against God.

Your order (Virtually) recommends these truths to others, I cannot sufficently assert, and therefore intreat you to enquire what will be the aggravation of walking contrary to them.

Iehosaphat sent his Princes to teach (that is, to encourage the Ministers to teach) in the Cities of Iudah, and by such Orders as these, you preach to the world, what is preach'd to you at Pauls.

Let me crave leave to be plain. You may easily be ensnared by casting your eye upon this subject; for, if you read no more, you have read too much: if you read on, expecting embroydery,

you

*you loſe your labour; if with neglect, your ſoules Either embrace* ſuch *truths heartily, or abjure them ſpeedily; be not deceived, God will not be mocked; the more gracious his condeſcenſion for acceptance, the more grievous his indignation for refuſall; and your refuſall of God can neither be more nor leſſe, then a* [ Choiſe rejection ] *I beſeech you therefore, reſolve upon ſomethin g, and let not your reſolutions come to no thing. As you are* Chriſtians, *make* Religion *your buſineſſe, that you may enjoy God, and as you are* Magiſtrates, *walk as becomes (if I may ſo ſpeak,* Earthly deities, *as) thoſe that are called* Gods.

*I do not charge you in the leaſt, but humbly* prompt *your conſciences to demand of you an* Account: *what have you done* like Gods, *and* for God *ſince you came into places of* Authority? *When you ſtood upon lower ground, did you not think magiſtrates* might *do more then they did? do you now do, what you* then thought? *If you ſay you have performed the commandment of the Lord; a by-ſtander wil perhaps reply, What mean then the* Blaſphemous *ſwearing, the* roaring *drunkenneſſe, the* [ common ] *whoredomes, the* rambling *Sabbath-breaking?* &c. *may theſe Sons of* Belial *plead liberty of conſcience? If you cannot reach thoſe that*

*pull*

*pull the crown from the head of Chriſt in way of Spirituall wickedneſſe: pray hold their hands, that would ſtab the heart of Chriſt by morall wickedneſſe. If* reaſon of ſtate *leave God to vindicate his own glory in matters of religion, let not* Laws of ſtate *lye dormant at your doors for want of execution. If you cannot do what you would, do what you can: do ſomething, & ſomething which may proclame you* [Deſervedly-renowned Chriſtian-Magiſtrates.]

*No more words but* wiſhes, *that I could* tempt you, *or* fright *you into Communion with God. 'tis the very deſire of*

My Lord and Gentlemen,

Apr. 12. 1655.

Your Soul-Servant,

Samuel Annesley.

# The First Sermon.

PSAL. 73. 25, 26.

*Whom* have *I in heaven* but thee? *and* there is *none upon earth that I desire besides thee.*

*My flesh and my heart faileth*: but *God* is *the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*

WEre Phylacteries in use among Christians, I would recommend this Scripture to be bound about your necks, or written upon the table of your hearts.

This is a Scripture whereon we may well say AMEN, to *Augustines* Confessions. *O the wonderful depth, my God, the wonderful depth of thy Word! though there be superficies blandiens*, an out-side sweetnesse, *tempting us to taste it: There's an inside excellency forcing us to admire it; its matter of horrour to view its dimensions*, but 'tis *horror honoris, tremor amoris*, an horrour of honour, and a trembling of love. For,

*Whom* have *I in heaven* but thee?] *q. d.* who is there in heaven for me to trust in, or call upon besides God? or thus, What is there, that is precious in heaven, which I

desire without thee, or before thee? *Whom* have *I in heaven* but thee?

*And* there is *none upon earth that I desire besides thee?*] *Tecum nolui in terra* [*locaphatsti,*] the word is used of *Shechem*, Gen. 34. 19. *he had delight in* Jacobs *daughter.* So, (*q. d.*) can I so much as wish, much lesse dote upon any thing on earth? nothing lesse, my acquiescence in God renders all things without him nothing worth, there is *none upon earth that I desire besides thee.*

*My flesh and my heart faileth,*] here he interweaveth his former complaint with his present comfort: *q. d.* my body and spirit are almost overwhelmed with grief, when I see my self so variously miserable, and the wicked so triumphantly happy.

But *God* is *the strength of my heart,*] in Hebr. it is *the rock of my heart*, a rock implies strength, and safety: *q. d.* Though my trials be so great that no human strength can prevent or sustain them, yet God is my Rock, the Rock of ages: In him I have never failing support, and safety. *God* is *the strength of my heart.*

*And my portion,*] it is a Metaphor taken from the ancient custome of dividing inheritances, whereby every Heire had his allotted portion: *q. d.* Let the men of the world share the world among them, let the *Ziba's* of the world take all, so I may have *God* to be *my portion.*

*My portion for ever,*] not for a time, but for ever, *tantum habeo, & nunquam non habeo*, I have so great a portion, and I shall never not have it. Whatever befals me, this is enough to uphold me, *God* is *the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*

And thus you have the words singly opened. I must confesse I am loath to make any further division; because our happinesse is bound up in their strict conjunction. Therefore without any more adoe, this Observation smiles upon you. That,

D.

*God alone is, beyond comparison, more desireable then any thing,*

*thing, then all things in heaven and earth.*

When *Israel* had sinned, *Exod.* 33. 13, 14. *Moses* first begs their *pardon*, he then begges *counsel*, and then *protection*; you have all answered in this, *I will be with thee*; but when he hath this, he craves more of it, *Lord shew me thy glory*, v. 18. Might we think any thing strange in a soul's restlesse impatience of the least absence, after some enjoyment of *God*, we might wonder at *Peter* when *Christ* had been but a *prayer time* absent, he would venture to walk upon the raging Sea; and at another time, to throw himself into the Sea, and all to enjoy him a *few minutes* sooner. But I need not call in Scriptures, unlesse for illustration.

For Explanation we enquire first,

*Qu.* 1. What is there in heaven that may take up the heart? (might we not rather aske, what is not there that the heart can desire?) I answer,

First, *Privatively*, bear with the expression, for I know not how else to word it. There's a double privation.

1. Of sin and all things attending it, *Rev.* 21. 4. *God shall wipe away all teares from their eyes, there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more plague, for the former things are passed away.* The wicked shall never grieve the godly more. There shall never rise an unruely thought, or disorderly affection more. Sin shall not only be pardoned, but abolished; there shall be an happy privation of sin. And,
2. Of Fear, there shall never be the least fear of being dispossessed, 1 *John* 4. 18. Perfect love in heaven casts out all fear of hell. We must while we live, *With fear and trembling work out our salvation*: But then, our *salvation*, will in a moment, *work out our fear and trembling*. Thus privatively.

Secondly, *Negatively*, and here again, I should excuse the expression, were it not, that what the heart of man

did never conceive, the tongue of man can never expreſſe. Therefore Negatively,

1. There's nothing that a carnal heart can any way fancy. There's no *Elyſian* fields, no *Turkiſh* paradiſe, there's no ſuch reſt as the lazy dream of, nor ſuch honour as will ſatisfie the ambitious, nor ſuch a treaſure as is ſuitable to the covetous. In a word, whatever a carnal man thinks of heaven, he thinks amiſſe. Not onely ſo, but,

2. Thoſe that are in heaven, have more glory then they can ſtand under. That though their bodies ſhall be like the glorious body of Chriſt, and their ſouls like Angels; yet all that we hear from them, like a complaint is, that their Crownes of Glory are too heavy for them. In *Revel.* 4.4. you have a viſion of the Church Repreſentative, *Sitting, and having on their heads crownes of gold*; but *ver.* 10. *They fall down before him that ſate upon the throne, and caſt their crownes before him*, as being willing their Crownes ſhould make God a foot-ſtoole. Their work is to hand off Glory from themſelves to God unto eternity. Plainly, there's no creature in Heaven, able to bear ſo much Glory, *as is there to be had.* And thus you ſee Negatively what there is not in Heaven.

Thirdly, *Poſitively.* What have I in Heaven but thee? Whom have I in heaven but thee? We will enquire firſt into the what, and the whom. and leave the [But] to be opened afterwards. What is there in Heaven?

1. *Grace glorified*, or Grace perfected; we ſee now darkly *ſub integumento ſymbolorum*, but *when I awake, I ſhall be ſatisfied with thy l'keneſſe*, that is, I ſhall be as like God as my ſoul can deſire. I ſhall never need to pray for Grace more, never ſtrive more to grow in Grace, our poor rivulets of Grace ſhall be ſwallowed up in the Ocean of Glory.

2. *Happineſſe ſhall be compleated*, our inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, 1 *Pet.* 1.4. that is, it is not compounded of corruptible ingredi-

ents.

ents. It is not ſubject to ſinful pollution. It is beyond poſſibility of withering, unto the dayes of eternity. And ſuch a *Reſt* there *remaines for all the people of God, ſuch honour have all the Saints.* This is the enjoyment, the What; we come to the company, the Whom. *Whom have they in heaven?*

1. *The ſociety of all Saints.* Thoſe whom we have loved, and prized, with whom we have wept, and prayed: whoſe company on earth hath been refreſhing. How welcome will a never-parting-meeting be in Heaven? Aye, thoſe whom we have admired, though we never ſaw them, we ſhall then ſee, and enjoy for ever; *Matth.* 8. 11. *Many ſhall come from the Eaſt, and Weſt, and ſhall ſit down with* Abraham, *and* Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *in the Kingdom of Heaven.* How ſweet will it be to diſcourſe with *Moſes*, when your face ſhall ſhine as well as his? To converſe with *Solomon*, when your wiſdome ſhall exceed whatever is recorded of his? To joyn in the conſort of praiſes with that ſweet-ſinger of *Iſrael*, when you ſhall be perſons after Gods own heart, without a *but* in your commendations?

2. *Angels ſhall be your companions.* We read in *Matth.* 28. of a guard of *Roman*-Souldiers, that even fainted away at the ſight of an Angel; and ſo ſoon as they came to themſelves, they run from their charge; but the ſame Angel ſaid to feeble women, *fear not.* They tell us now, they *are our fellow-ſervants?* but Chriſt hath told us more, we *ſhall be their equals, Luk.* 20. 36. though not in nature, yet in qualities: we ſhall be no more ſubject to ſin then they: we ſhall want earthly enjoyments no more then they: we ſhall be happy as long as they. And thus you have the anſwer to the firſt Query. The ſecond is,

Qu. 2. What is there on earth to enter the liſts of compariſon with the enjoyment of God? May we not ſee the fartheſt end of all worldly perfection? I will repreſent the world in its faireſt dreſſe; and name not onely what [*of the world.*] moſt men think the beſt; but what

[*in the world*,] good men know the beſt. And though they appear iu *Troops*, yet in the midſt of worldly ſufficiency you will be in ſtraits.

1. Take the world in the Scripture-diſtribution, 1 *John* 2. 16. *All that is in the world, is either the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, or the pride of life*; pleaſures, profits, or honours. Had you ſuch delight in the creature, as that you could ſay, *this is the gift of God*: So much *money* as to *anſwer all things*: ſo much *honour*, as to *cauſe your terrour in the land of the living*. You may read one Text that ſhall grant this to be a kinde of happineſſe, but with the next, breathblaſt it, *Pſal.* 144. 15. *Happy is the people that is in ſuch a caſe*; *yea, happy is the people whoſe God is the Lord*, in ſuch a caſe; what caſe is that? that hath victory over enemies, *v.* 10. that's *honourable*; Relative comforts, *v.* 12. that's *delightful*; all manner of ſtore, *v.* 13. that's *treaſure enough*. But will ye ſee how they ſhrinke? *Happy is the people whoſe God is the Lord*; as if he corrected himſelf for calling any thing elſe an happineſſe.

2. Suppoſe a ſpeedy deliverance from all grievances, and an aſſured ſecurity in all earthly deſirables. Theſe will ſeem to warrant ſuch language, *Soul take thine eaſe*, Heart take thine eaſe; for, *God hath dealt bountifully with thee*; ſit down and wiſh, 1 *Chron.* 4. 10. *Oh that thou wouldeſt bleſſe me indeed, and enlarge my coaſt, and that thou wouldeſt keep me from all evil, that it might not grieve me.* Should God ſay, Be it unto thee even *as thou wilt*; yea, give thee *more then heart can wiſh*; and give thee to *enjoy the good of all thy labour, that thou takeſt under the Sun, all the dayes of thy life, to enjoy riches, and wealth, and power, to take thy portion, and to rejoyce in thy labour*, this is a rare *gift of God*, *Eccleſ.* 5, 18, 19. yet for all this, *Pſal.* 73. 20. *When thou awakeſt, thou ſhalt deſpiſe their Image.* When thou awakeſt them, they ſhall ſee they have been all this while but in a dream: all their greatneſſe and ſuppoſed felicities, were but an imaginary, a vain and deſpicable thing. All the pageant of worldly pompe, and pride, and life

life it ſelf is but an image, a thing to look upon: good for nothing elſe. 'Tis valuable only for the outward appearance Though it be drawn to the life, it can have no reality of life. Take one inſtance of a man, who had as thriving a plentiful eſtate, and as quiet a long life as any we read of; I mean *Iſaac*, he was a great heire, and in one year, *he ſowed and received a hundred fold*, Gen. 26.12, 13. *The man waxed great, and went forward and grew, untill he became very great.* Yet this great man is ſo little taken with all this, that out of choice he dwells in a tent, (a houſe which he might carry in a wagon,) he lookes for ſomething better; a City that hath foundations, where he may dwell with God. And you know that wiſe and learned *Moſes* counts the worſt of Chriſt, to be more worth then the treaſures of *Egypt*, *Heb.* 11. 26. and *Chriſt is but a means to the enjoyment of God*: the end is alwayes more excellent then the means, ſo that the leaſt enjoyment of God, is beyond any thing of the world incomparably excellent.

3. Grace with all its noble operations: Grace in its utmoſt earthly perfection: quickning Grace: ſanctifying Grace: ſaving Grace. This is without all peradventure deſervedly deſireable: We are by nature dead, and Grace quickens us: By nature in darkneſſe, and Grace enlightens us: By nature Rebels, by Grace Children, Bretheren of Chriſt, Heires of a Kingdome, what not? Take Grace in the very flowre and beauty of it, *Full aſſurance* of Heaven, when a ſoul doth aſſuredly believe in Chriſt, and is certainly perſwaded, that all the promiſes, ſpiritual and temporal, ſhall be made good to a tittle: that the heart is comforted in all the riches of full aſſurance, which is a condition very rarely attained. Yet if you will believe an experienced man, he will tell you, that though in nothing he came behinde the very chiefeſt Apoſtles, *yet he is nothing*, 2 *Cor.* 12. 12. *He knew whom he had believed, and that there was laid up for him a Crown of Glory.* And yet he complaines that he is got no further then a life of faith,

2 *Cor.*

2 *Cor.*5.7. *We walk by faith and not by ſenſe.* He profeſſeth that to be with Chriſt is far better, πολλῷ κᾶλλον κρεῖσσον, much more better, *Phil.* 1.23. But perhaps you will ſay, this comes not up to the proof: Well then, to ſpeak directly; could we abſtract Grace from God, the ſoul would finde as little ſatisfaction in Grace, as it doth in Sin; you ſhall ſee, that though the ſoul be under a diſtemper, not having ſuch high and prizing thoughts of God, as at other times; yet when it begins to get from under that neglect, nothing on this ſide God himſelf, can give any ſatisfying ſatisfaction, *Cant.* 5.5. *I roſe up to open to my beloved, and my hands dropped with myrrhe, and my fingers with ſweet ſmelling myrrhe, upon the handles of the lock.* Whether we underſtand by hands dropping with myrrhe, actions anointed with the grace of the Spirit, or the grace of Chriſt which he left behinde, as a ſweet odour to allure her when he put in his hand; either, or both theſe, clearly ſhew, that it is not Grace that will ſerve the turn, but the God of Grace that is ſought after. Further yet, to enjoy Chriſt, *barely to enjoy Chriſt*, his Preſence, his Teaching, his Prayers, and whatever you will name on this ſide the enjoying of God in him, it is nothing. *Judas* had a greater priviledge this way, then we can any of us hope for; But it is *God in Chriſt reconciling the world to himſelf*, that is incomparably deſireable. And this puts us upon the Great Enquiry, which is the

3. *Query. What is it to enjoy God?* A tempting, ſinking, chearing Query. *What is it to enjoy God?* a deſireable tempting Query. Who doth not itch with deſire to hear it anſwered? A ſinking Query: whoſoever thinks I ſhall not fall infinitly ſhort in this diſcovery: I muſt ſpeak it to their reproach, They have lower thoughts of the enjoyment of God, then are fit, (I had almoſt ſaid, then are poſſible) to be harbour'd in a gracious heart. But yet, it is a chearing Query, we may poſſibly climbe by a winding ſtaire, to have a comfortable glimpſe of this enjoyment. It is counted a princely ſport to ſee a *Faulcon* mount

mount after a *Heron*; his towring flight deſerves an *ecce*. But oh then! what is it for a poor ſoul, that hath *lyen among the pots*, in the ſculkonry of the world, to be *winged* by that *Dove* that lighted upon Chriſt; and to be enabled to ſay, *Return unto thy reſt, O my ſoul*? Well then, what is it to enjoy God?

I anſwer; *The enjoyment of God, it is the reſtleſſe turning, and the conſtant reſting of the ſoul God-ward:* You may perceive the deſcription referres to the Load-ſtone, you know the Needle of the Compaſſe is ſtill trembling towards the North. And why ſo? here we muſt betake our ſelves to the refuge of our ignorance, in ſaying no more, but 'tis from an occult quality. Juſt ſo 'tis here, the ſoul once touched with a peculiar taſte of Gods diſtinguiſhing love, is ſtill working, and trembling God-ward, and cannot reſt any where elſe. And why ſo? From an occult quality, inſenſibly conveyed by the communication of the Divine Nature. I call it a *reſtleſſe turning*, for heavenly reſt is ſtill in motion. And a *conſtant reſting*, becauſe all the reſt the ſoul hath, it is in God. And then I terme it rather *God-ward*, then, *in God*: to meet our diſtance, before we arrive at a full enjoyment; and though the diſtance will be leſſe afterward, yet 'twill in a ſenſe be infinite for ever. But this ſhort deſcription is too long, and unwieldie. Let's therefore take it in pieces, and conſider the enjoyment of God in foure Periods of *Duration*. Time I cannot call them, becauſe the laſt of them is Eternity.

1. *In this life.* But do not miſtake me, as though the enjoyment of God here, is more worth, then that which was ſpoken to in the firſt query, *viz.* better then what there is in Heaven, unleſſe you take it *preciſely*, and *abſtractly*: as if you conceive Heaven to be enjoyed, without the enjoyment of God. And then that *poor pittance* of enjoyment of God, which we may have here, is more worth then Heaven would be to eternity: Heaven would be a burden to us, were it not for the enjoyment of God

there. And therefore *John* 17.21. Christ prayes that *They all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.* There's not equality, but there's similitude, there's reality, dignity, union, communion.

The enjoyment we have of God in this life, is either in Ordinances, or in Duties, or in Graces, and all through Christ. I might speak of these distinctly, but I forbear, because they do sweetly *coincidere*. The same thing may be an *Ordinance* in regard of Gods appointment: A *Duty* in respect of our management: And a *Grace* through the Spirits influence. *e. g.* Prayer as God requires it, 'tis the Ordinance of Prayer; as we perform it, 'tis the Duty of Prayer; as the Spirit assists us, 'tis the Grace of Prayer. Now there is a common presence of God in Ordinances: which is as the outward Court, open for all comers, and alas most persons go no further. But there's the secret of his presence, within the Veile for his own, and nothing lesse will satisfie them, *Psal.* 63. *O God thou art my God, earely will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee, to see thy power and thy glory as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary. My soul followeth hard after thee.*

2. The second period of our enjoyment of God, is *between our dissolution and resurrection.* And now we begin to launch out into the Deep. You know *Peter* speaks excellent things of Faith, 1 *Pet.* 1, 8. by believing in him whom we never saw, *We rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of glory.* But what's Faith to Fruition? what's hearing to vision? we must now go softly, least our *feet stumble upon the dark mountains.* Consider therefore particularly, what the body enjoyes of God, while it lies in the grave, and then what the soul enjoyes of him at the same time.

1. The body, *the body?* what's a dead body capable of? what should we speak of a piece of putrifying, rotten, stinking clay? though 'twas never so lovely while living, yet we say of it when dead, as *Abraham* of *Sarah*, *Remove it out of my sight.* Aye, but God will not say so: *he counts*

*the*

*the duſt of Jacob:* he that loved us when we were nothing, doth not love us leſſe for our rottenneſſe.

1. The body hath reſt in the grave, and peace there, and ſleep there, never better in beds of down, *Iſa.* 57. 2. *They ſhall enter into peace, they ſhall reſt in their beds, every one that hath walked uprightly.*

2. The body in the grave is ſtill united unto Chriſt, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 14. the body *ſleeps in Jeſus.* As one that drawes a ſword, and holds the ſcabberd in one hand, and the ſword in the other, hath both in his hands, though ſeparated. So when Chriſt drawes out the ſoul: never ſhall any man, or devil pluck the body out of his hand. Is not this enough for a *carcaſs*?

2. What then doth the ſoul enjoy, if the body hath ſo much? the ſoul is capable of much more, the body can have but a ſenceleſſe happineſſe; which though it ſhould be without, it could not complaine of want. But the ſoul lives, and is free from that clog, which inevitably hindred it in its higheſt activity. It is now at libertie, and enjoyes,

1. A long-deſired-freedom from ſin. I might have ſaid as much of the body; but the body is not ſenſible of its freedom; and though it be *pura maſſa* in the hand of Chriſt, who *will preſent it without ſpot or wrinkle*, yet it is the ſoul only that underſtands its freedome, and apprehends its happineſſe, it being among the *ſpirits of juſt men made perfect*, *Heb.* 12. 23.

2. The ſoul enjoyes an immediate glorious knowledge of God, Chriſt, Truth, and what not? 'tis ſaid of *Solomon*, 1 *Kings* 4. 29. *He had wiſedome and underſtanding exceeding much, and largeneſſe of heart, even as the ſand that is on the Sea-ſhore.* But it may be applied to every ſoul in Heaven, *A greater then Solomon* (was upon earth) *is here.* The Riddles of Grace ſhall then be opened: Your creeping apprehenſions of God ſhall then be elevated: Your

diſtance from God ſhall then be ſhortned.

3. That which the ſoul enjoyes there is ſo great, that if it ſhould come from Heaven to declare it on Earth, neither could that ſoul expreſſe it, nor we underſtand it. Read a lecture of civil-policy to the wilde *Indians*, and tell them the excellency of a well ordered Kingdome, they cannot underſtand it, though you ſpeak in their own language: neither can you fully expreſſe it, a lecture is too ſhort to contain it. We read of *Lazarus*, whoſe ſoul Chriſt returned into his body, whom much people of the Jewes came to ſee, purpoſely *to hear ſtories of the other world*; but not a word from him of any ſuch matter. *Pauls* rapture may ſatisfie with the reaſon of it, 2 *Cor.* 12. 4. he there heard ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα, worldleſſe words, that is, words that cannot poſſibly be repeated on earth. *Our old bottles are not able to hold that new wine.* And yet all this is but the ſecond ſtep to the full enjoyment of God.

3. The third period is at the Reſurrection, and during the time of the laſt judgement. God hath appointed a day wherein he will perfect all his. *Camero* ſaith, *'Tis no curioſity to affirme, that the Saints and Angels in Heaven, had a new glory by the exhibition of Chriſt: the great myſtery of the Incarnation being thereby better known.* We may then ſafely affirme, that both Saints and Angels ſhall have a new glory at the Reſurrection: They ſhall then ſee the *ſolemnity* of Heavens-Glory.

1. The body ſhall then be raiſed by him, in whom *it ſlept*; By him with whom *its life was hid*, and that with ſingular qualities, 1 *Cor.* 15. 42, 43, 44. the body when 'twas laid to ſleep in the earth, was ſubject to infirmity, filthineſſe, putrifaction. But when it ſhall be raiſed, theſe grave-clothes, theſe rotten rags ſhall be left behinde: Gods preſence with it ſhall render it incorruptible. The Sun in its ſhining doth but ſhadow forth its glory; It ſhall be unwearyedly ſerviceable to the ſoul in its higheſt workings.

2. Soul and body ſhall be united with excellent majeſty:

jeſty: I told you, the ſoul in its ſeparation hath an immediate enjoyment of God: *fruitur inſigni gloriâ, ſed qua plena non eſt*; it enjoyes very great glory, but not fulneſſe of glory. The ſoul is but a part of man, and ſo cannot have its compleat perfection till its *divorce* from the body be cancel'd. Now then ſuppoſe the body as before inſtanc'd, and the ſoul as now compleated, united together, what muſt needs be the reſult? The body to be ſpiritualized, and the ſoul's capacities to be unconceiveably extended: Surely then, and there will be *fulneſſe of joy in Gods preſence.* Pſal. 16. 11.

3. Soul and body thus united, ſhall then be abſolutely and eternally freed from any poſſibility of ſinning: Till the general Reſurrection, this is not compleated: For, ſhould a dead perſon be reſtored to live again upon earth, that perſon would ſin again. This is eaſily proved, for we read of *Elijah*, *Eliſha*, and *Chriſt*, that raiſed perſons from the dead; but all which were raiſed, (*I except only thoſe that roſe at Chriſts Paſſion, or Reſurrection, for I affirme nothing of them*; but all the reſt) ſinned. And that they ſinned again 'tis clear, for they died again; and death paſſeth upon none, but thoſe that have ſinned, *Rom.* 5. 12. once an abſolute freedome from ſin, and for ever an abſolute freedome from death. Now that they died again, 'tis clear, for, 1 *Cor.* 15. 20. Chriſts Reſurrection was the *fruits of them that ſlept:* That this freedome is a priviledge of the firſt magnitude, you have a brighter evidence then a cloud of witneſſes, *Iſa.* 6. 3. The fiery Seraphim cry one to another, *Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hoſts.* How many hundred years after do you find the Miniſters of the Goſpel, that lead the Goſpel Worſhip, ecchoing back the ſame celebration; *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God Almighty, Rev.* 4. 8. What other attribute do you finde thus admired?

4. Union with Chriſt ſhall then be perfected. There's a very neere, ſtrong, excellent union here; 'tis expreſt by ſeveral metaphors: *Phyſically*, by head and members: *Politically*,

*litically*, by Husband and Wife; *Corporally*, by food and body: But then comes the πλήρωμα, then ſhall the Saints be his *fulneſſe that filleth all in all.* Then, and never till then ſhall the fulneſſe be mutual.

5. Soul and body thus united unto Chriſt, ſhall be caught up to him, and then ſhall the Saints in their own perſons ſit with him in his laſt moſt glorious work of judgment, they ſhall *judge the world*, aye, they ſhall judg the *God of the world.* The principalities and powers that captive wicked men at their pleaſure, are themſelves reſerv'd in everlaſting chains to be judged by thoſe whom they formerly foiled, 1 *Cor.* 6.3. plainly they ſhall appear in the glory of Chriſts Kingdom, having thrones with him in the aire during the time of the judgement.

6. All that ever the ſoul enjoyed before, in being with God in Heaven till the Reſurrection, ſhall be ſwallowed up with what it ſhall enjoy at the Reſurrection: All before ſhall be as nothing, though far greater then can be expreſt, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 10. *When the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from heaven, in the glory of his power: in that day he ſhall be admired in all them that believe.* Admiration is at ſome ſtrange thing: So, that his glory then will exceed all former apprehenſion. And there will be never a Believer to whom Chriſt will not be admirable.

And now we are come to the very threſhold of Glory: But one ſtep further, and then you are in the laſt period.

4. In Glory, *in Glory?* and what hath this been all this while? *on earth*, if you will believe Scripture, Believers are *Princes in all lands*, Pſal. 45. 16. not like worldly Princes that are but ſubjects in another Kings Dominion; No, they are *higher then the Kings of the earth*, Pſal. 89. 27. *In death*, it may in ſome ſort be ſaid of all, what was ſaid of *Moſes*, *Deut.* 34. 5. he died *ſecundum os Domini*, ſo from the Hebr. God did by him, as a fond nurſe by her babe, kiſt him, & laid him down to ſleep. At the *Reſurrection* we ſhall *meet the Lord in the aire.* And do you not call this Glory? is there more yet? *aye, yet.* All that hath been ſpoken, is

but

but a few green ears rub'd in your hands; the full crop, the harveſt is yet behinde. I am *now beginning* to tell you what it is to enjoy God in Glory.

1. All the enjoyments of God upon earth are but *earthly*, when compared with the perfection of heavenly enjoyments. It is true, Grace in the *abſtract* is beautiful and glorious: Faith whereby we have communion with God, it is a precious Grace: But Grace in the *concrete*, Grace as it is in us, is almoſt contemptible: Faith as it is in us, our faith, what bracks and flawes, and ſick-fits hath it. But the Text I refer you to, is, *John* 3. 12. Chriſt calls *Regeneration* it ſelf an earthly thing, when compared with thoſe heavenly things, which he would afterwards communicate.

2. We ſhall ſee God; you know God is ſaid to ſpeak to *Moſes face to face*, that is, Viſions affrighted the other Prophets, the ſtate of their minde was changed, they were wrapt with extaſies; but it was not ſo with him, though compaſſed with the divine ſplendour: Yet God ſaith to this *Moſes*, *Thou canſt not ſee my face*: And he favours him ſo far as to tell him the reaſon of it, *There ſhall no man ſee me and live*, (*q. d.*) no man in this life ſhall ſee me; he muſt firſt die, and be changed, and then he ſhall have a peculiar Revelation of the Divine Majeſty: then, 1 *John*. 3. 2. *We ſhall ſee him as he is*: But how that is, I know not. The two *amazing myſteries* ſhall then be unveiled, the *Trinity* and *Incarnation*. We ſhall for ever take in *glorious apprehenſions* of God, without *cloying*: and for ever give out *glorious admirations* of God without *wearineſſe*.

3. There ſhall be a neerer union between God and the glorified Saints then, then ever there was between Chriſt and a gracious ſoul before. The truth is, we may ſay that of this union, which *Paul* doth of the peace of God, *It paſſeth all underſtanding*: that is, before a perſon feel it; he is unable to feigne what it is, and when he feeles it, he is unable to expreſſe how excellent it is; They ſhall *be filled with all the fulneſſe of God*. Our union with God

ſhall

ſhall be neerer then Gods with Angels, for the humane nature is advanced to greater dignity, then all the glory of the Angels put together, by reaſon of Chriſts aſſuming our nature. Chriſt is not aſhamed to call us *Brethren*, *Spouſe*, *Co-heires*: where doth he ſay ſo of Angels? But this particular I will turne over to the next to be more fully cleared.

4. Our communion with God ſhall be immediate, without ſo much as a *Mediatour*: We ſhall go ſtreight unto God, and immediately participate his Glory and Happineſſe. There can be no immediate communion between God and the Creature, while ſin or any of the effects of it remain: but when ſin ſhall be aboliſhed, then God ſhall be *all in all*, as before Chriſt was *all in all*: Chriſt ſhall *deliver up the Kingdome to God the Father, when he ſhall have put all enemies under his feet*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 24. and onwards. And *when all things ſhall be ſubdued unto him, then ſhall the Son alſo himſelf be ſubject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.* Chriſt as man conſtitutes a *part* of the Church (yet he is ſtill the *Head* of the Church; as *Adam* is *part* of man-kinde, yet ſtill the *head* of man-kinde,) but there will be no further need of a *Mediatour*, *e. g.* Suppoſe you ſaw a company of Cryſtal Globes, placed in a parallel line, and a ſingle Globe by the middle of them, to tranſmit the Sun-beames unto them, becauſe their poſiture will not admit the Suns immediate beams; but when the Sun ſhall ſo come about, as that they may immediately receive its beams, there's no further uſe of the ſingle Globe. So here, while we through our diſtance from God, are uncapable of immediate enjoyment, there's a neceſſity of Chriſts mediation; but when all things that cauſe that diſtance are removed, and we brought into the Preſence-chamber, no *ſuch* neceſſity of a Mediatour.

5. The enjoyment of all this ſhall be *in God unto eternity*. God ſhall be to the whole man then, what the ſoul is to the body now: *totus in toto*, not to informe it; but a perſon may as ſoon ceaſe to live, as to live out of God.

As

As a fiih in the Sea hath a larger ſpace to ſport in, then ever it can make uſe of; but let it ſwim where ſhe will, ſhe is ſtill in the Sea, and cannot live out of it. So a Saint hath infinitely more in God, than can be comprehended, but yet ſtill he *abides in God.* Never will the eye be off him: nor the tongue be weary of his praiſes: never will the thought wander after any other object. There's a paſſage, 1 *Cor.* 14. 15. *I will ſing with the ſpirit, and I will ſing with the underſtanding alſo*: He oppoſeth the ſpirit to the underſtanding ſo affected, as that it cannot diſtinctly explain what it hath conceived; but it ſhall be otherwiſe, when we ſhall ſing the perpetual *hallelujahs.* And then there's an eternity: in *Rev.* 5. 13, 14. all the Devils in hell ſhall be forc't to roare out *bleſſing, honour, glory, and power* unto God; but it is the Saints ſhall undertake it *for ever and ever.*

(6.) All this, and infinitely more, ſhall be exhibited in ſo much glory, that 'tis *a mercy* 'tis not diſcovered to us. Read but *the tenth of Daniel*, and this will be no Paradox. *Daniel* had kept an extraordinary faſt to intreat God for his people: well, *v.* 6. *and ſo on*, Chriſt himſelf with one Angel comes to give him an anſwer of his prayers: but alas good man, he is not able to bear it, *v.* 8. his ſpirits are diſperſt and ſpent, and there he lies in a ſwound, more like a carkaſſe then a man: Chriſt and the Angel have much adoe to keep life in him: they ſpeak affectionately, touch him effectually; and all little enough; he is not able to bear the brightneſſe of their Glory, but as ſoon as he recovers his ſpeech, his lips make ſhift to quiver out, *O my Lord, by the viſion my ſorrow is turned upon me, and I have retained no ſtrength: for how can the ſervant of this my Lord, talke with this my Lord,* (much leſſe then with that my Lord yonder, who is the Lord of Angels, *v.* 16, 17.)?

A ſuitable diſcourſe of the enjoyment of God in Heaven, would *overwhelme* us while we are on Earth. Should all the wits in the world, men of the choiceſt parts: and all thoſe of whom the world is not worthy, men of the

higheſt graces, joyne together in a deſcription of the enjoyment of God; when they have ſaid their utmoſt, if the whole ſpace to the Firmament were filled with ſand, and the ſpace above the Firmament were filled with water, and we had the number of all thoſe ſands, and of all thoſe drops: multiply the deſcription by every ſingle ſand, and every ſingle drop, and then let every ſingle ſand, and every ſingle drop be multiplied by the whole number of both, yet this would fall ſhort, *infinitely, ſuperinfinitely ſhort* of a perfect deſcription, what it is to enjoy God in glory. For there will be,

Firſt, Some *ſhadow* of communication of incommunicable Attributes. There are two Attributes of God which we call incommunicable, *viz.* his *infiniteneſſe*, and *incomprehenſibleneſſe*.

1. For Infiniteneſſe; if a Philoſophical deſcription of it might be admtted *in Theologia beatorum*, in Heavens Divinity, our glory would be infinite: for that is infinite, *extra quod aliquid poteſt capi*, infiniteneſſe is that, of which when you have ſaid what you can, there's more beyond it: And this we may ſay of our enjoyment of God.

2. For Incomprehenſibleneſſe; if the Apoſtles ſay of Goſpel-excellencies on this ſide Heaven, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. *Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him*; What ſhall we ſay of Glory?

Secondly, There will be what at preſent is *inconſiſtent*, and *impoſſible*, As,

1. A piece of clay ſhall enjoy more of God then, then an immortal ſoul can now. Plainly, our bodies ſhall enjoy more of God then, than our ſouls can now. I have already mentioned *Daniels* fainting, in a comparatively poor viſion: but, *Go thy way Daniel, thou ſhalt reſt, and ſtand in the lot at the end of the dayes*, Dan. 12. 13. (*q. d.*) Thou ſhalt reſt in thy

thy grave, and ſtand up at the general reſurrection; and thy *body* ſhall even *ſtare* upon greater viſions, then thoſe at which thy *Spirit* now ſhrinks.

2. Thoſe graces whereby we have now moſt Communion with God, ſhall (*as they are now*) then ceaſe, 1. *Cor.* 13. 10. *and ſo on.* Faith ſhall then be ſwallowed up in triumph. Hope in enjoyment. And we ſhall want nothing to pray for.

3. Everlaſting worke, and everlaſting reſt ſhall for ever meet, and give perfection to each other. *Heb.* 4. 9. compared with *Rev.* 19. 1. ther's the eternall *quieſcent worke* of praiſe. And thus I have with a coale drawne a landſhip of heaven. I come now to the reaſons, why God alone is beyond compariſon more deſireable, than any thing, than all things in heaven and earth.

*Reaſ.* 1. The uncertainties, mixtures, and finiteneſſe of all things on this ſide God, fully evidence that God is ſingularly more deſireable. In the booke of *Eccleſiaſtes*, you have *Solomons* inventory, and at the foote of every page of the Account, the ſumme is *vanity*, and the totall ſumme, *vanity and vexation of Spirit.* Will you know what vanity is? Vanity is that which hath no true Soliditie of eſſence, ſtabilitie of laſtingnes, nor power to bring any happineſſe. Will you know what vexation of Spirit is? *Aske your own hearts.* And truely, for graces themſelves, as they are hamper'd and clogg'd in us, the ſoul may even long to be *rid of them.* I meane to be perfected, that what they have but in part, may be done away.

2. What ever excellency there is in any thing, it is originally, eminently in God. *Rom.* 11. 36. *of him, and through him, and to him are all things*: of him, as the firſt *Author*: through him as the *Preſerver*: to him as the laſt *ſcope.* Every thing hath its degrees of perfection, according to what of God is communicated. 1 *Cor.* 3. 23. *All things are yours, yee are Chriſts, and Chriſt is Gods*: that is, the world is yours for your uſe: ye are Chriſts as his peculiar: and Chriſt perſonally

ſonally as Mediatour, for the glory of *God eſſentially*, that all may be ſwallowed up of *Deity*.

3. There is nothing can enlarge, and ſatisfie the ſouls capacities, but God alone. Poore low-ſpirited creatures may have ſome kind of ſatisfaction in the world, as *Eſau*, *I have enough my brother*: but then the capacities of the ſoul are not enlarged. Others may have their capacities enlarged; but then *the eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the eare with hearing*; (and theſe are but the moſt capacious ſenſes) but in God enlargedneſs, and ſatisfaction meet. *Pſal.* 81. 10. *Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it*: that is, let thy juſt deſires be never ſo large, thou ſhalt have them.

4. The deſigne of Gods worke, and the order of his working, renders a reſtleſſeneſſe in all things, on this ſide himſelfe; 'twas never Gods intention, that any enjoyment ſhould be any more than an encouragement; that any grace ſhould be any more than a means to bring us to himſelfe; when his people grow fond of any thing, he withdraws it. Ther's a worme at the root of our comfortable gourds. Ther's a *Canker* in our beſt graces. We read of *Lots* purity, *Moſes* his meekenеſſe, *Jobs* patience, *Peters* forwardneſſe, *Paul's* raptures; but if theſe will glory, it muſt be in the Lord; for we read alſo of *Lots* inceſt, *Moſes* his paſſion, *Jobs* fretfulneſſe, *Peters* deniall, and *Paul's* thorn in the fleſh. Thoſe that have great graces, have alſo great corruptions, and *corruptions in thoſe things wherein conſiſts their excellency*. I ſhould now come to the application, but that I am obſtructed, by the doubts, and objections of tender Chriſtians. Yet I ſhall paſſe by all but one, and that I muſt ſpeak to for the honour of my *Maſter*.

Some may object, Will not what was hinted of immediate enjoyment of God in heaven, be derogatory to our ever adored Mediatour: and we dare not entertaine any diminiſhing thought of him?

I anſwer firſt. It is not that the Father perſonally, but that the *Diety eſſentially* may be *All in All*. Why Chriſt ſhould continue his inferiority when his worke is done, cannot

cannot be imagined. He ſhall be honoured for his mediation, but with an addition. Might I ſay, any perſon in the Trinity receives more honour than other, Chriſt ſhould have moſt. *Rev.* 5.13. *Every Creature which is in Heaven heard I, ſaying, bleſſing, honour, glory, and power be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.* Particularly, *unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

2. This will exceedingly advance Chriſt in the thoughts of all, while 'twas neceſſary he veiled his Deity: and when his work ſhall be done, he ſtill *continues his humanity*, to converſe freely with his brethren in his Fathers houſe. Oh the intimacie! there will then be, between Chriſt and Chriſtians! the Apoſtle tells us, *we ſhall ever be with the Lord* Chriſt. Oh what communication of glory will there be to each other! *Rev.* 3.4. *Theſe ſhall walk with me, for they are worthy.* Rev. 5.12. *Worthy is the Lamb to receive honour and glory, and bleſſing.* Oh the mutuall rejoycing, and delight in each other! *Prov.* 8.31. from eternity Chriſt rejoyced in *the habitable part of his Earth*: to eternity will his habitable earth rejoyce in him, *in whom dwells the fulneſſe of the God-head bodily.* In a word, the eye can never be off Chriſt *as mediator and God now*, the eye ſhall never be off Chriſt *as God and mediator then.*

This objection anſwered, & Chriſts honour vindicated, we may the more boldly crave his help for the improving of the Doctrine.

(*Uſe.*)

The firſt uſe ſhall be of information. There are three leſſons I would have you learn *by heart*, that you may rather from your own hearts, than from diſcourſes, and books be inwardly perſwaded of theſe truths.

1. That Heaven is extreamly ſubjected to carnall miſtakes in the thoughts of moſt men, 'tis made a flexible imaginary, fancyed—— *I know not what*: moſt men conceive it to be a place of ſenſual happineſſe. That baſe Wizard can wiſh, *Num.* 23,10. *Let me die the death of the righ-*

*teous, and let my laſt end be like his.* Alas, he underſtands not what he wiſheth; ther's nothing in Heaven ſuitable to his covetous double-heart. Thoſe that deſire heaven, do it moſt as a *reſerve* upon ſome peeviſh diſcontent, & wearines. *Elijah* himſelf is frighted into the wilderneſſe, and then preſently, *'tis enough, now O Lord take away my life.* 1. Kings. 19.4.

2. If God be thus incomparably deſireable, then all the time of our life, that is not ſpent, either directly, or at leaſt *by reduction*, to promote the enjoyment of God, 'tis loſt time: the enjoyment of God is worth all our paines, that you will grant. And that our time is little enough to be employed about it: this you cannot deny. But what then? ſhould we turne *Votaries*, and bring up a new Religious Order, when there's *more than a good many already*? No; I therefore added the word *Reduction*, that though all our actions be not ſtrictly Religious, yet they muſt all be reducible to Godlineſſe, e.g.

1. Food and raiment are things naturally neceſſary, and he that provides them *not for his Family, is worſe than an infidel:* he that provides them not for himſelf, is that, and more; for he is worſe than a mad-man. But ſtay a little; never was text more wreſted by wordlings, than that of the Apoſtle, pray therefore take another to keep it ſtreight. *Mat. 6. 23. Seeke you firſt the Kingdome of God, and his righteouſneſſe.* And his righteouſneſs, *mark that*; you muſt rather ſeek *Conformity* to God, than *food and raiment.*

2. Relative comforts ſweeten our lives. But yet *brethren, this I ſay, the time is ſhort, it remaineth, that thoſe that have wives be as though they had none, and they that rejoyce, as though they rejoyced not, and they that buy, as if they poſſeſſed not, for the faſhion of this world paſſeth away.* Why, what would you have us to do? *I would have you without carefulneſſe, that you may be holy, both in body and Spirit, that*

*you*

*you may pleaſe the Lord.* 1. Cor. 7. 29. &c. We muſt mind God more than relative comforts.

3. Higher yet. The time you ſpend in Gods immediate worſhip, even in extraordinary worſhip, 'tis loſt time, if you cannot anſwer Gods ſearching queſtion. *Zach.* 7. 5. *When you faſted, and mourned, even thoſe ſeventy years* (that is longer than moſt men live) *did you at all faſt unto me, even unto me?* Once more.

4. The moſt noble accompliſhments, eminent ſervices, unparaleld ſufferings, are nothing, if love to God be not in us the *primum mobile*: the very impulſive cauſe. 1. *Cor.* 13. 1. 2. 3. *Aaron's* bells, Miniſters preaching, will be like *tinkling cimbals*, childrens rattles, if we do it not in love. Martyrdome it ſelf, may go, for a kind of *ſelf murder*, if flaming love do not kindle the fire. And that love to God is principally meant, 'tis cleare, becauſe it is *that love* which is more excellent then faith. So that now you ſee. All the time that is ſpent, in earning our bread: in the enjoyment of our comforts: in the worſhip of God: in the higheſt ſervices and ſufferings: it is all loſt, if the enjoyment of God in all theſe be not principally aymed at.

3. Religion is a very ſublime buſineſſe. As 'tis generally (*abuſively*) managed 'tis nauſeous. Oh how many have been hardened againſt it by thoſe that profeſſe it: but accordingly to its undeniable Principles, 'tis not only amiable, but *Majeſtick*. Judge of the piece by a patterne: conſtantly and reverently to uſe every Ordinance, and yet to look thorough them, as having no worth at all, but as they tend to God. *Pſal.* 84. 1. 2. *How amiable are thy tabernacles O Lord of hoſtes! my ſoul longeth, yea even fainteth for the* Courts of the Lord. Paſſionate expreſſions: but doth he reſt here: no, no. *My heart and my fleſh cryeth out for the living God.*

Again, To be contented with every thing, yet ſatisfied with

with nothing. *Phil.* 4. 11. *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content*, but vers. 19. no lesse than *riches of Glory* will supply all his wants.

Again, humbly to take deniall of degrees of grace, and yet restlesly to strive to be above them. 2. *Cor.* 12. 10. *I take pleasure in infirmities, for when I am weak, then am I strong.* Christs strength is most seen in my weaknesse, aye but *Phil.* 3. 11. I would if it were possible be as holy now, as I shall be at the resurrection of the dead.

In a word, to live in heaven upon earth, *Phil.* 3. 20. *our conversation is in Heaven.* These are some of the Principles of the oracles of God. Is not Religion a more heroick businesse than most men think it?

( *Exortation* )

Be exhorted therefore, to account no *paines* too much to take; no *time* too long to waite, no *thing* too much to suffer, so you may manage Religion according to the worth of it, and enjoy God in all ways communicable. Let your eyes be ever towards the Lord.

1. Be not envious at the prosperity of the wicked: never so much as tamper with any of their wayes of getting, that which they call happinesse. Suppose, saith *Cyprian, thou was placed on the top of some Mountain, whence thou mightest safely behold, fluctuantis mundi turbines*, the unquiet world that cannot rest; *among the wicked 'tis a crime to be innocent.* Pleasures are surfetting?

Honour's *blandientium virus occultum*, the poysonous breath of flatterers. And riches, *O nominum quanta diversitas*, how are they mis-called? we cal them goods, and they are almost constantly made use of to evill. Suppose you saw (*with a heart to consider*) such a prospect, would this tempt you, to fall in love with it? But now look back again (for alas while you are gazing on the world, you have your back upon God) you may hear a voice behind you, Prov. 23. 17. 18. *let not thine heart envy sinners, but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. For surely there is an end,*

*and*

*and thine expectation ſhall not be cut off.* More need pitty, then envy thoſe that have their portion in this life: they muſt pay deare for every moments beggarly happineſs. The uncleane perſon for every *motion* of burning luſt, ſhall lye *millions* of years in everlaſting burning. The intemperate for every ſip of generous wine, ſhall have no other drinke then *rivers* of brimſtone. In a word, theſe whom God now beſeecheth by us, whom we pray, in Chriſts ſtead, to be reconciled to God, but in vaine; they ſhall never be troubled with theſe intreaties more; but as they love a diſtance from God, they ſhall be ſet at an eternall diſtance: And as they laugh now at miniſteriall reproofs, *God will laugh* then at their *deſtruction*: And thoſe that complement with God in an empty profeſſion, God will profeſſe he knows them not, and deny them Salvation. *Conſider this you that forget God: now draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you*: but you muſt firſt *cleanſe your hands yee ſinners, & purify your hearts ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, & weepe: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heavineſſe. Humble your ſelves in the ſight of the Lord, and he ſhall lift you up.* Jam. 4. 8, 9, 10.

2. Seriouſly ſet your ſelves to finde out experimentally, what it is to enjoy God, to have communion with God: *Long* for it, you ſhall never loſe your longing. Pant after it, God underſtands the *Rhetorick* of your breathing, as well as of your cry. If, ſaith *Auguſtine*, *I deſire nothing elſe but thee, I beſeech thee Father, let me finde thee: if I doe deſire any thing ſuperfluous, doe thou thy ſelfe cleanſe me: and make me fit to ſee thee.* Chriſtians, rouze up your ſpirits: what is it that makes you ſo low ſpirited, as to have the leaſt contentment in the greateſt enjoyment on this ſide God? Doe you not know the worth of Communion with God? whoſe fault's that? *Hoſ.* 6. 3. *You ſhall know, if you follow on to know the Lord*, you have a promiſe, that your knowledge ſhall encreaſe, from the morning of Regeneration to the noone day of glory. What yet hinders? Is it variety of fears? *Worldly fears*: your hearts are toſt to and fro with worldly buſineſſe:

*doubting fears*, you have more to object, than ever you have hopes to be answered. Trembling fears, alas you dare not think of such an enjoyment. To all these. God the *Father* bids you cast your cares upon him; *the earth is the Lords, and the fulnesse of it*, and he knows what things you have need of. *Christ* bids you bring your doubts unto him; have you any doubt that Christ cannot answer? and if he can, surely he hath done and suffered enough, to perswade us of his willingnesse: there is in him *Voluntas Omnipotens* as *Bernard* expresseth it, his will is Almighty. And let those that are of a trembling heart, goe to the *Comforter*, 'tis his Office to pray in you, as 'tis Christs Office to pray for you; He is *the God of all Grace*: what grace then can you want? Deare Christians, I would be an importunate wooer, and take no deniall, no excuse, no delay. *Commune with your owne hearts*, and deale ingeniously: is there any lust worth keeping, to the losing of God? and you cannot keep both. *Psal.* 139.23,24. When God shall search you who knows your hearts; when God shall trie you, who knows your thoughts; if he see any wicked way in you; how can you expect that he will lead you in the way everlasting? Deale ingeniously, Christians, is there more strictnes required then you are willing to practise? *Speak (conscience) is it even thus?* And shal the Commands of Christ be grievous? did Christ stick at Nothing? *Nothing*, though the termes were very hard to worke our reconciliation, that we might enjoy God. And shall we streine at what we are commanded for the applying of that reconciliation? God forbid. I beseech you, beloved, doe not plead any thing, which your selves upon the *review* cannot but judge unreasonable. Be perswaded to walke closely with God. Act faith, and strengthen it with obedience, that you may be able comfortably to say, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire?* &c.

The

# The Second Sermon.

*This Exhortation was rather* touch'd *then* handled *and therefore you may expect ſome neceſſary enlargements.*

*'Tis pitty this Doctrine ſhould want perſwaſive directions, how to improve it. I begin therefore with Conviction.*

AND, Oh that I could rouze the ſluggiſh and ſtartle the careleſſe Chriſtian! 'Tis heart-work I ſhall this day attempt. And therefore be it known to you (that your expectations may not be fruſtrated) be it known to every one of you, that come rather to ſee a Sermon, then to hear a Sermon; rather to be *tickled* with notions, then *wounded* with convictions; I have nothing wil pleaſe ſuch curious hearers. I cannot ſcratch your itching ears; Pray obſerve my theme; It is the enjoyment of God, *Communion with God.* Is this a ſubject fit for *Quibles?* is this a buſineſſe to be jeaſted with? Nothing leſſe.

'Tis true in one reſpect, my ſubject requires that I ſhould rifle all the Rarities of Nature, and gather up all the Flowers of Retorick; that I ſhould borrow (were it poſſible) the tongue of Angels, and ſpeak words onely fit for heaven. But on the other ſide, 'tis more neceſſary

to ſpeak in *the ſimplicity of the Goſpel*, and to ſet forth *truth as it is in Jeſus*.

And therefore, Chriſtians, if your conſciences be aſleep, I beſeech you waken them a little. *I have an Errand from God unto you*: I ſpeak, at preſent, to thoſe of you that worſhip God, and yet are Atheiſts; that profeſſe Chriſt, yet are *not Chriſtians*; if you will not give me leave, I will take it, to breake in upon your conſciences, and to charge you, as you will anſwer it at your eternall perill, to make true anſwer to this ſearching demand.

What is it you make your Idol? in whatſoever you promiſe your ſelves ſatisfaction, and happineſſe, that's your God. Now what is it? Is it the world's Trinity. (1. *John*. 2. 16.) Profits, Pleaſures, Honours? In ſhort, what ever it is on this ſide God, you muſt be infidels both to *Divine* and *Pagan* writings, or you muſt charge your ſelves with folly and madneſſe.

In *Eccleſ*. 1. 2. Solomon gives you the reſult of his curious enquiries into the utmoſt of creature-excellencies: *vanity of Vanities, ſaith the preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity*. Conſider he was furniſhed above all other men, with all variety of requiſites, critically to *anatomize* the worlds happineſſe. He doth it, and when he hath done, he gives account of his unparallel'd experiments: All is nothing but very *vanity*; and not only vanity, but *vanity of vanities*, that is, extream vanity; and he doubles the duplicat, to note the unqueſtionable certainty of it. Every thing *ſeverally*, all things *joyntly* are *comparatively vanity*, when put in the ballance with God: *miſerable* vanity in reſpect of mans ſinne: *unprofitable* vanity, in order unto happineſſe. All things are *deceitfully* vaine in regard of truſt, and *conſtantly* vaine in their inſtability. Thus Solomon.

But if any are more taken with a wiſe Heathen, then a Divine Oracle: would they but be true to that: *Seneca* (who wrote a book of a happy life) doth expreſly perſwade men to *place their happineſſe in God, to follow God,*

*Obey*

*Obey God; he can want no earthly thing, whose desire is placed above these things.* Thus *Seneca.*

But if this truth (*viz.* that there's no true happinesse on this side God) be not sufficiently confirmed in the mouth of these two witnesses, I wil endeavour to produce a *third*, and that shal be your selves. And that thine own *confessions* may be a *selfe-conviction*, I shall change the use into an

(*Expostulation.*)

And, Oh that I could prevaile upon your hearts in Gods behalfe!

1. What satisfaction did you ever find in any thing on this side God? or to speak in Scripture language, *Rom. 6.21. What fruit have you ever had in those things whereof* you have cause to be now *ashamed?* This is a question which deserves the *answer of a good Conscience unto God*, that is, Commands such a conscientious answer; wherewith you may dare to appear in the presence of God. And Christians, I speak to every one of you, but chiefly to those that are *hot* in the chase of some worldly excellency; that strongly fancy (if your projects should not be abortive, and your *designes broken*) that you can as easily reach happinesse, as a child thinks he can play with the setting Sun, if he were but on the top of the next hill he sees.

I suppose you have often heard of the *Philosophers stone*, that hath fill'd men with hopes of a golden age; but they could *never yet finde it*: the most unwearied, and expensive search hath left them to sit down with shame and disappointment: aye, and just so will all your dreams of earthly happinesse. I remember *Augustine* askes those that have a confluence of wealth and honour, *that think themselves happy, but are void of true happinesse, what comfort do these things bring you? 'tis better not to want them, then to abound in them; when they are gotten, they do as much torment you with fear of losing, as they did before with care to get them: Such good things* (*saith he*) *do not make us good men.* But

2. How many times already have you *shifted your mark?* and changed your thoughts about happineſſe, and yet are as farre to ſeeke as ever: one while you thought, if you could but get ſuch an eſtate, *ſuch a competency* (as you call'd it) then you ſhould be happy. When men are low, they think if they were but *Some-body* in the worlds account, they ſhould be happy; when they are advanced, they are more unſatisfied then before. How many here, that once thought if they ſhould be worth but ſo many *Hundreds*, as they are now *Thouſands*, they ſhould be happy? and do not theſe very perſons, in their own apprehenſion want more now then they did then to purchaſe happineſſe? What more ordinary, then for ſingle perſons to think, were their condition changed, they ſhould be happy? and when it is ſo, they are as farr from happineſſe as before. The reaſon of all this is, becauſe men expect that in the creature, which God never placed there.

God never intended the creature ſhould be thy God. What is only to be enjoyed in God, 'tis in vain to expect it in the creature. Men may be ſo childiſh, as to think their Counters to be Gold, & they may lock them up for ſuch, in their Cheſt; but when they come to make uſe of them, they ſhal then be forc't to be ſenſible of their miſtake. So you may at preſent, pleaſe your ſelves with your enjoyments; but your Gold is not currant money in heaven: your Jewels are not worth the ſetting in the crown of Glory: your Titles wil not be acknowledged in the true Court of Honour. *What will you then enjoy when your preſent enjoyments ſhall ſhrink to nothing?*

3. What have you to object againſt the waies of God, wherein you may get acquaintance with him, and climbe up to communion with him? Chriſtians, poore Miniſters that love your ſoules, would faine have you to live in the light of Gods countenance; to have all your enmitie to God done away. Believe it, Sirs, we doe not onely many a time appear upon our knees to God for you, but could be content, to come upon our knees from God to you, to beſeech you not to ſtand in your owne light; Is it not

enough

enough to make ones heart to ake to thinke men need entreaties in such a busineſſe ? what then, to ſee men will not be entreated? Will you but bring forth your ſtrong reaſonings, why *you will not* mind Religion more ſeriouſly ; that being the onely way of obtaining communion with God ?

*You doe not like ſo much ſtrictneſſe.* And why, I pray you? *It is a dull and mopiſh buſineſſe.* Did you ever trie it ? if not, youare not a competent Judge. I cannot believe that man ever taſted honey, that ſaith it is not ſweet. *David* ſaith, *Pſal.*119.72. *The law of thy mouth is better unto me then thouſands of Gold and Silver.* And he had more thouſands of Gold and Silver, then ever you will have. *But you do not like ſuch preciſeneſſe.* Why doe you not like it ? if you have no reaſon for your contempt, you are worſe then brutiſh, if you have any reaſon, produce it. *Why thoſe that make ſuch a buſtle about religion, they are as worldly, and they are every way as baſe as others* : ſuppoſe this to be true of too many profeſſours; yet is it their religion, or their want of religion, that they are thus? *But thou knoweſt not how to make a diſtinction, thou thinkeſt they are all thus, and they learne it by going to ſo many ſermons, and making ſo many prayers, and keeping ſo many faſts.* Stay, friend, doſt thou ſpeake as thou thinkeſt? dideſt thou ever hear a ſermon where men were taught to be Hypocrites? dideſt thou ever hear a prayer wherein theſe ſins of profeſſours were not bewayled ? *No, that is true: they are too cunning to do theſe things openly, but vnder the colour of religion they doe all manner of abominations.* Well, I will not contradict thee any further: but grant all this ( though tis an abſurd ſlander, but) I will ſuppoſe what thou ſayeſt to be true. What's the *ergo* ? the conſequence, the concluſion of theſe premiſes? *Therefore Religion in the Power of it is moſt excellent and deſirable.* For that which is counterfeited is unqueſtionably excellent: you never knew any one counterfeite leade, & braſs, but ſilver & gold : you never knew any one counterfeit peebles, & Briſtow-ſtones, but precious ſtones, & diamonds. Certainly, would men but

act

act rationally; they must turne all their *prejudices* against Religion, into *motives* to be Religious. Yet further

4. If God himself shall expostulate with you; are you resolved against all his entreaties? Oh, that I could put your consciences to a stand; That you would but consider, God doth, as it were, make it his request unto you., *That He, and You may be each others Portion*!

Suppose there were a company of leprous beggerly rebells, under the sentence of death, and ready to be dragg'd to execution; spare them, they are never like to do their Prince any considerable service; let them perish, and their Prince can be no loser in his Honour, nor be censured as over severe, they having brought all manner of miseries upon themselves by their rebellion. Suppose in this case, the Prince should send one Officer after another, & above all his onely Son, to entreat and beseech them to accept of a pardon, and to accept of Court preferment: what ever they can say against this, he will answer their objections: what conditions they cannot performe, he will give them assistance: though they are defective in the performance of easie conditions, yet they shall have acceptance: they shall never come to him for any thing but they shall have audience: he will do more for them, then for those that never offended him: they shall share in the glory of his Kingdom: only he intreats them to be friends with him. If these Rebells obstinately and scornfully refuse this offer, what may they expect?

Hearken every one of you, that is unconverted, this is thy case: Thou art the sin-sick Rebell: *He that believeth not, is condemned already. Brimstone is scattered upon thy habitation.* God needs not thy service, yet he sends one Embassador after another, to urge thee with terms of Peace. I do now in my Masters name beseech thee to *receive a pardon upon thy bare Homage.* God offers to make thee *higher then the Kings of the earth, his subjects are altogether Kings.* God doth, as it were, tempt thee with glory: And wilt

thou

thou not for all this be perſwaded? Perhaps thou doſt not thinke God thus entreats thee; conſult that place, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. *Now then we are Embaſſadours for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us, we pray you in Chriſts ſtead, be you reconciled unto God.* Obſerve here, the Miniſters of the Goſpel are not only *Legati Dei*, but *Surrogati Chriſto*: this is that, wherein the leaſt of the Miniſters of the New Teſtament excell the greateſt of the old: The Prophets they were Gods Embaſſadours to the people, but 'twas not for *Chriſt*, nor in *Chriſts ſtead*. To make this plaine to you: When a Prince ſendeth a *Meſſenger* unto another, that Meſſenger is only an *Embaſſadour*, the Prince being not bound to carry the meſſage himſelfe: But now Jeſus Chriſt, he is the *Fathers Embaſſadour*, and Chriſt is thereby bound to bring the meſſage of Peace; but being neceſſarily employed elſewhere (in the ſame deſigne of grace) he conſtitutes us his Officers: ſo that we do not only come in the name of God, but in the place of Chriſt, to do that worke which is *primarily* his. *John.* 20. 21. *As the Father hath ſent me, even ſo ſend I you.* And this was the commendation of the Galatians, *Gal.* 4. 14. That they received the Apoſtle *Paul* even *as Chriſt Jeſus.* Now do but conſider, how low God ſtoops to take you up into communion with himſelfe. And wilt thou not ſigne the Articles of agreement? ſhall ſome baſe inconſiderable luſt [*which thou art aſhamed to plead for, while thou hugge ſt it*] ſhall ſuch a luſt ſtand in competition with God? lay claime to thy heart, and carry it. And wilt thou never turne to God? If at all, why not not now? Is it fit for God *to hold the candle of his grace for thee to ſin by*? But if you will not by all this be perſwaded, I muſt turne to thoſe that will: and to them I come with a uſe (I hope they long for, it is a uſe) of

(*Direction*)

How to obtaine communion with God. Is not this the uſe your ſouls deſire? The plaine truth is, This is the uſe for which I did in ſome ſort make it *a caſe of conſcience* to treat

of this Text a ſecond time. Having endeavoured heretofore to ſhew you the *Glory* of Glory. I cannot but think this to be the queſtion that lies uppermoſt in every gracious heart: how ſhall I obtaine this matchleſſe priviledge?

Give me leave to premiſe but one *Caution*, and you will be the better able to take the following directions. The Caution is this. Do not miſtake the nature of communion with God, either in the doctrine of it, or in the enjoyment of it; do not fancy it to be what it is not, (have patience a little, and I ſhall tell you what it is by and by.)

The onely way I ſhall preſcribe to prevent this miſtake is this, [*Learne to know, infallibly, the difference between the motions of the Spirit of grace, and of the Spirit of deluſion*] you know all communion with God, is by the Spirit of grace; and all manner of Spirituall deluſion *pretends high* to ſpeciall communion with God. In ſhort, you may know the difference thus.

The motions of the Holy Ghoſt are alwaies *Sanctifying motions*, and *Humbling motions*, and *Orderly motions*; whatſoever is contrary to any of theſe qualifications, they are at the beſt, but *gilded* deluſions. The Spirit of God in all his operations advanceth holineſſe; holineſſe doth neceſſitate the heart into an humble frame: and both theſe are alwaies orderly, that is, the Spirit of God never puts upon one duty, when we are in another: the Spirit of God never raviſheth the heart with comfort, to divert it from ſervice: the Spirit of God never puts perſons to act out of their calling, nor beſide the rule of Scripture. This caution premiſed, take theſe Directions.

1 Learne to know what it is to enjoy God. Communion with God is nothing elſe but the *communication of grace between God and the Soul*; it conſiſts in ſpecial influence of grace and favour from God to the ſoul, and ſpeciall returnes of grace and honour from the ſoul to God. As the ſun diſſolves the clouds in leaſurely drops of water upon the earth, & the earth returnes its vapours upon the influence of the ſun.

The

The reaſon why I name this, and why I name it firſt, is this. Chriſtians are ready to thinke, that all communion with God conſiſts in the *comforts of the Holy Ghoſt*: whereas Chriſtians may as *really* and as *advantagiouſly* enjoy God in ſecret *conveyances* of grace: in inward *Supports*: in a concealed *acceptation* of ſervice: in the *drawing out* of the ſoul God-ward, as in the more open, and comfortable manifeſtation of God unto the ſoul. Communion with God is a familiar friendſhip (pray let reverence on our part be ſuppoſed) you know it is ſaid of Moſes, *Exod.* 33. 11. *And the Lord ſpake unto Moſes face to face, as a man ſpeaketh unto his friend.* Do we not as uſually go to a friend for counſell, and advice, to ſcatter our confuſed, & perplexed thoughts, as for comfort and chearing to raiſe our hearts? in a friends boſome we entruſt our ſorrows as well as our joyes, and friendly communication *gaudia conduplicat, maroresdimidiat*, doubles our joyes, and halves our ſorrows. But.

Suppoſe a ſoul, even ſpiritually overwhelmed, betakes it ſelfe to God: The heart is ready to breake, till it hath vent before the Lord: if afterward the ſoul hath no more eaſe, then by the bare launching of the ſore, God poures in no balme, only gives ſupport, nay, ſuppoſe God adde gall to the wormwood: will you ſay, this ſoul, in this caſe, hath no communion with God? you will betray your ignorance that you know not what communion with God means. In Gods *Secret viſits* of the ſoul, and the ſouls *reſtles groping* after God, though nothing but darkneſſe be apprehended, yet that ſoul lives in the light of Gods countenance: The ſun ſhines, though a cloud interpoſeth; God ſmiles, though the ſoul do not perceive it. But that you may have the joyes of Gods preſence, take a further direction.

2. Be careſull to remove the hinderances of Communion with God. I am ready to believe, that every gracious ſoul *may* find out what it is that hinders his Communion with God: And if ſo, they may then *probably* procure *rational* comfort, though not *ſpiritual* comfort; they may get into the *way* of comfort, though they get not the

*uſe* of comfort; they may ſet themſelves againſt the obſtructions of their comfort, and that very attempt puts them into the way of peace.

Examine therefore, whether thy trouble be through *ignorance*, or through *melancholy*; or whether ſome *ſin* do not lie at the bottom. If it be through ignorance, knowledge will ſcatter it; If through melancholy, the *Phyſitian* muſt anſwer that caſe of conſcience. But the greateſt danger is when ſin lies at the bottom: and that Chriſtians ſhould paſſionatly abhor. I remember *Athenagoras*, in his Apology for Chriſtians, thus beſpeaks the Heathen Emperours: *There is an infamous rumour ſpread abroad of us, as if we were guilty of ſeveral wickedneſſes; if there be any truth in it, ſpare neither Sex nor Age, but deſtroy us, our wives and children.* It ſeems Chriſtians then, thought that Chriſtian unworthy to live, that did any thing ſcandalous. And *Auguſtine* in his directions to *Paulina*, enquiring how God is to be ſeen; tels her in this ſearch, *plus valere vivendi, quam loquendi modum*; ſhe might better learn it by her own holy living, than by his beſt counſel. *Cyprian* ſaith, *We live, not ſpeak great things.* In ſhort, that Chriſtian that would get and maintain Communion with God, muſt be *very curious* in his converſation. We muſt look upon ſin as God looks upon it, and then we cannot think any ſin to be ſmall. If thou be drowned, what matters it whether thou lieſt *twenty fathoms*, or but an inch under water? If thou be killed, what matters it whether thou *be chok't* with a *hair*, or *ſhot* with a *Cannon bullet*? The leaſt ſin indulged, hinders Communion with God. And let this be minded: There's no *ſort* of ſins, ſins of infirmity; that is, thou canſt not ſay all ſins of ſuch a kind, are ſins of infirmity. e. g. Vain thoughts are not all of them ſins of infirmity, for ſome ſpeak the heart to be wicked, *Ierem.* 4. 14. All roavings in prayer are not ſins of infirmity; for where the heart is not tended, roavings are abominable. All ſinful dreams are not ſins of infirmity, for where the heart burns with luſt, it *ſteams* forth ſleeping

and

and waking. In a word, *Pſa.* 5. 4. *Thou art not a God haſt pleaſure in wickedneſs, neither ſhall evil dwell with thee.* Remove obſtructions if you would have Communion with God.

3. Reſolve upon a diligent patience, if you would enjoy God. Do not think that ſenſible Communion with God, is to be given ſo ſoon as ever thou haſt ſtept over the threſhold of converſion. Study an *Active, Believing Patience*: that is, do not make ſtrange concluſions againſt thy ſelf, if thou doſt not *preſently* find the fruit of thy endeavours. This is the gallant temper of a Chriſtian, when he can unqueſtionably believe God will make good his word, and therefore he will humbly and obediently wait, though it be to his dying day: when the ſoul can faithfully believe, that every ordinance of God hath grace (as it were) annexed to it, and therefore he will wait though he have not the ſenſe of it. To believe that God will ſubdue his corruptions; yet if God ſee it meet, that he ſhall run up his time in ſtrugling and conteſting with ſin (though he would be heartily glad of more comfortable ſervice, yet) he will through grace keep his ſtanding: he will proclaim Gods Soveraignity, and freedom, that he may give what grace he pleaſeth, and ſet upon what work he pleaſeth, he is reſolved humbly to wait and ſpeak well of God. Is not *ſuch* a perſon excellently quallified for Communion with God?

4. Give every ordinance of God its *due obſervance*. Let not ſome Ordinances ſwallow up the reſt. There's no Law of the Creation for the greater Sea-fiſhes to eate up the leſſer: much leſs is there any Law of Grace, for the greater Ordinances of God to juſtle out the leſſer. Chriſt ſaid, *Theſe things you ought to have done, but not to leave the other undone.*

The hypocrite he employes himſelf about the *exteriour*, and more *pompous* work of Religion, with a *ſecret* hatred of inward ſanctity: the unwary Chriſtian is buſie about the *Eſſentials* of Chriſtianity, and too much neg-

lects those *circumstantials*, whereby others *seeing* their *good works*, might glorifie their *Father which is in heaven*: But those Christians that do give every Ordinance of God its *due respect*, that do not *interfere* in Acts of worship, are most likely to receive the benefit of every Ordinance. Divine Ordinances are *social* means of Communion with God. One string untun'd, hinders the harmony: one Ordinance neglected, makes a flaw in our injoyment.

Apostacy you know is directly opposite to the enjoyment of God. If those that are now turn'd *rank Apostates*, would but ingenuously confess their way of declining, they must tell you 'twas by disliking and undervaluing some Ordinances of God, as if they might well be spared. e. g. How many have stumbled first at the *singing* of Psalmes? then what need Scripture be *read* publickly, they can read that at home? then why should they *instruct* their children, they cannot relish what they learn? then why should they *baptize* their children, they know not what is done to them? then why should they attend upon their *Ministers that preach by Office*, others can do as well as they? then why should they *pray* but when the *Spirit* moves them, and so they pray but by fits, &c. And so on, *who knows whither*? I dare appeal to their consciences, whether these, or such as these, are not *the degrees*, whereby the Sun of Righteousness hath gone backward in their *Diall*. Christians, if ever you would have Communion with God, do not think that God will suffer any of his Ordinances to be tryed at your *bar*, and not to be currant without your *approbation*. Must Jesus Christ consult with you what *Laws* to give his people?

5. Have a special regard to the *secret* workings of your hearts in secret duties: the faces of men, and the faces of duties, are no more than *Porticibus picturæ*, the Title page of a book cut with pictures. Men may take a *pride* in frequenting the best Lectures, and in being acquainted with eminent Christians, and in proposing of

*remote*

*remote* caſes of Conſcience: There are very many perſons take a great deal of pains *to work out their* damnation *with fear and trembling*; but now, what is the inward worſhip of thy heart in publick worſhip? what is thy hidden ſervice of God in common ſervice? doth thy heart melt and bleed at a Sermon, when thoſe that ſit in the pew with thee, can read no ſuch matter in thy countenance? what are thy *inward* thoughts? thy *ſecret* prayers? thy *private* reſolves? thy *retired* meditations? yea, let me ask thee further, what are the moſt ſecret workings of the inner man? *In thoſe things wherein Communion with God doth principally conſiſt, a man can hardly be an Hypocrite.* e. g. Take an inſtance in ſecret prayer. When thou art dull, and canſt not expreſs thy ſelf: How doth thy heart *heave*, and *work*, and *tremble*, and *throb* within thee! What *longing*, and *breathing*, and *hankering* after ſpiritual enlargement! At another time when thy heart is enlarged, How doſt thou find the pouring out of thy heart? is it not like the pouring out of liquor from a narrow mouth'd veſſel; thou doſt but *bulpe* out thy deſires! Are not the thoughts of thy heart like a crowd *preſſing* one upon another! And when the diſcovery of Communion with God is *moſt* ſpiritual, thou thinkſt it *not* ſpiritual enough: this is the way to inſinuate thy ſelf into Gods boſom. But yet this is not all.

*6.* Obſerve the relation Chriſt ſtands in for the bringing you unto God, and lay hold on Chriſt that he may bring you to his Father. Jeſus Chriſt, he intercedes with the Father, and doth as it were ſay, *Father*, here are a company of *Rebels*, juſtly fallen under thy diſpleaſure, they deſerve to be ſet at an eternal diſtance from thee, but I muſt needs have them pardoned, and received into thy boſom: make thine own terms, let Juſtice require never ſo great ſatisfaction, I will pay the utmoſt farthing, give them what Laws thou pleaſeſt, I will undertake they ſhall obſerve them: Thus Chriſt acts with the Father in our behalf. And then he comes to the poor ſinner, on the Fathers

thers behalf, and brings down the terms of reconciliation; He brings the ſinners bond in his hand ready cancel'd, the Covenant of peace ready ſealed, and he perſwades the ſinner to come unto him, that they might have life. Goe therefore unto Chriſt, and make him thy ladder to climb up unto God. Do not *idly* ſay thou canſt not, but go on till thou meeteſt with a ſtop, that thou canſt go no further. *Waſh thy hands from lazy ſecurity*, and beg ſtrength. It is an excellent *problem* for a Chriſtian's ſtudy, to find out *the over-powring work of ſpecial grace, and the concurrent ſubſerviency of mans will.*

Chriſtians, this is a ponderous direction, and muſt be ſeriouſly obſerved. *Iuſtin Martyr* relates, that when in his diſcourſe with *Tryphon*, he mentioned the knowledge of Chriſt as conducing to our happineſs and perfection, *Tryphon's friends laught at it.* I hope none here are ſuch kind of perſons; but that you will rather ask what is it to fetch ſtrength from Chriſt? briefly thus,

The fetching ſtrength from Chriſt, is the finding out of a fit promiſe, and applying it to our purpoſe, by a reſting upon Chriſt, for the performance of it, in a conſcientious minding of the condition on our part, *e.g.* In the preſent buſineſs, *Eph.* 2. 18. through Chriſt *we have acceſs by one Spirit unto the Father:* But how ſhall I come to Chriſt? *Mat.* 11. 29. by taking his *yoak* upon you, and *learning* of him: but how ſhall I learn? and how ſhall I be ſure of ſucceſs? *Prov.* 8. 34. by continual attendance upon him, thou ſhalt learn, and thou ſhalt be bleſſed.

7. Make uſe of each *Perſon* of the *Trinity* to each other for the enjoyment of Communion with *Deity*. Every perſon of the Trinity works both jointly and ſeverally in the bringing of the ſoul unto God. The *Father* he effectually draws the ſoul to Chriſt, *Iohn* 6. 44. And he graciouſly accepts of that which is no way ſuitable to his infinite holineſs. The *Son* as Mediator diſchargeth all that is requiſite for the reconciling of us unto the Father. The *Holy Ghoſt* doth immediately work the ſoul to all ſpiritual good.

good. Now then, do you learn to make use of every persons peculiar work.

Can there be a more *pleasing*, a more *profitable*, a more *honourable* work, than to search how the *Father* draws to the Son, and promiseth to send the Holy Ghost? Yet it is the *Son* that engageth the Father, by the working of the Holy Ghost; and yet it is the *Holy Ghost* which worketh the heart to close with Christ, and thereby we have access unto the Father. How sweet is it to *unriddle* these mysteries of Grace! The very *untying* of these *knots*, and the *picking* out the *kernels* of these seeming contradictions, must needs be advantageous unto the soul.

Christians, will you bring your case to a *Point*? Is there a necessity of acquainting thy self with God, or not? Canst thou *patch* up an happiness *to serve thy turn*, without Communion with God? if not, what dost thou resolve upon?

*Alas, this business is beyond my strength; I cannot change mine own heart; though there are encouragements and helps, I know not which way to go, nor how to pleade them.*

Well, but is the Spirit of God able to quicken thee, and to teach thee, and to enable thee? he stands especially engaged, 'tis his immediate work to prevail upon the heart. Go to the Spirit, and beg of him, that he would lead thee to the Father, and to Christ, that thou mayst have fellowship with the Father and the Son.

*Alas, I cannot go unto the Spirit, I have so long resisted him, so often grieved him, with what face can I go? I am unworthy of his guidance.*

Well, but Jesus Christ stands engaged; and never speak of Merit, that day thou speakest of Christ. Go to Christ, and beg that he would send his Spirit into thy heart. Jesus Christ is thy Kinsman, he knows how to pity thee; and the Spirit of Grace is at his dispose. Oh! then go to Christ.

*Alas, I cannot go to Christ, I have no ability to go, not so much as a will to move towards him. I cannot go to Christ.*

Well, but the Father is engaged to draw thee; though thou canst not go; a man may be drawn, which hath no naturall willingness of his own. The father stands engaged to change the will, & absolute promises are theirs that lay claim to them (provided they do not overthrow their own claim.) Go therefore and tell the Father thy case.

*Oh, I cannot, I dare not go unto the Father; his justice must needs smoak against me, his holiness will never bear with me; It would argue impudence in me to venture into his presence. Oh I dare not go unto the Father.*

Then go back to Christ, he hath satisfied the Fathers Justice, and wrought our reconciliation. God the Father was in Christ the Son reconciling the world unto himself: And Christ hath obtained Reconciliation *for thee* if thou wilt accept the word of Reconciliation. Go therefore unto Christ.

*Oh, I cannot go unto Christ, there's something required on my part, though not as a* Price, *yet as a* Qualification; *I must have some* inherent *righteousness, or else no Communion with God.*

Then go back unto the Spirit, it is his business to work thy heart into a *conformity* unto God; God doth not onely require thou shouldst be holy, because he is holy; but the Holy Ghost is ready to make thee holy. The winde *now* blows, do thou spread the sailes.

*Oh, but I never shall, I never can have any holiness to bear any kind of* proportion *to the holiness of God, and therefore it is in vain——I have experience more than enough of my heart. And I may by this time know what to expect.*

Then go back unto the Father; he graciously *condescends* to accept of a little, the breathings of the soul, the trembling of the heart God-ward is not rejected by him.

Christians, did your soules but thus walk in the spirituall immensities of Deity, how would you be *filled with all*

*the*

*the fulneſs of God*? How would you take the Apoſtle *Iohn*'s counſel, while you are learning to take it, 1. *Iohn* 2. 28. *Abide in God.* Abide in God, by this direction you may enjoy the *End* in the *Means*, and have much of heaven while you are upon earth.

Is it needful after all this to be particular in an Uſe of *Conſolation*?

Hath not every true Chriſtian a *Natural-ſpiritual* inſtinct to run unto God what ever ailes him? And certainly, *if there be any conſolation in Chriſt, if any comfort in the love* of God, and in the *fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt*. If there be (as moſt certainly there is) profit in obſerving Gods Ordinance, and *walking mournfully* before God, then this Doctrine will afford unſpeakable comfort in all caſes, when *fleſh* and *heart faileth*, then may the ſoul that hath intereſt in God *ſhout unto him with the voice of triumph*.

1. When the fleſh failes, when the outward man is in an afflicted condition, and who can tell the benefit of afflictions? garlick among roſe-trees, makes the roſes the ſweeter, and thoſe roſes which are made by art to grow without prickles, loſe their ſent. Affliction with the enjoyment of God is *infinitely* better than proſperity without it. But what is thy affliction? is it bodily weakneſs? thy *vile body* ſhall ere long be changed. Art thou poor and deſpiſed? *riches of glory* will make full amends. What need I name particulars? take one Text which is ſo plain, the meaneſt may underſtand it, yet ſo full, there's none able to explain it, 2 *Cor.* 4. 16, 17, 18, *For which cauſe we faint not, but though our outward man periſh, yet the inward man is renewed day by day; for our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen, for the things which are ſeen are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen are eternal.*

2. When the heart failes, when the ſpirit is toſt, and

ready to be overwhelmed; Christians in this case will grant, that enjoyment of God is abundantly able to bear up the heart in soul-trouble: but this is *the trouble* of their souls, they neither do (and they fear) they never shall enjoy God.

To those that make this mournful complaint, I have one general request, before I undertake their particular comfort; that is, That they would observe from this very Text; *That enjoyment of God may consist with soul-trouble.* Grant but this, and I hope though thou art a trembling Christian, full of spiritual jealousies; yet thou shalt see ere we part, that thou *mayest*, and that thou *dost* enjoy God in thy soul-trouble. Suppose I should *peremptorily* assert it: what hast thou to say to the contrary?

1. *This is for Christians of the highest form, Gods special presence is onely fit for heights of grace, and that I have no hopes of*: To this I answer.

1. By way of concession, 'tis very desirable to have abundance of grace, to be *strong men* in Christ, able to digest strong meat; that is, the more secret mysteries of grace. But

2. Bare weakness never yet made any breach between God and the soul, nor hindred Communion with him. Art thou less indulgent to thy child, because he is a sick child, and a weak child? *Psa.* 103. 13, *Like as a Father pittieth his children, so the Lord pittieth them that fear him.* But

2. *It is not weakness so much as wickedness; corruptions are prevalent, and such corruptions as many times I am afraid are inconsistent with grace, and therefore I may sadly expect to be set at an eternal distance*: To this I answer also.

1. By way of concession; It is a just and a sad cause of complaint to have conscience flie in thy face because of sin:

ſin: our ſins are called our debts: we may eaſily run into debt, but 'tis hard to get out; we may eaſily fall into ſin, but not ſo eaſily recover our ſtanding. But

2. If ſin be diſcerned, 'tis thereby weakned. A penitential eye hath a kind of *faſcination*. It is in ſin as in treaſon, if a treaſon be diſcovered before it break out, the treaſon it ſelf is thereby broken. That ſoul that is truely ſenſible of its danger, is paſt it; though God may deal by thee as *David* by *Abſolom*, keep thee for a while at ſome *humbling* diſtance, yet thou mayeſt beg of God, more confidently than *Abſolom* did of *David*, that thou mayeſt ſee his face, becauſe thou art not able to bear his eſtrangement, and thou ſhall not be denyed, but ſhalt have either *comfortable* fruition, or *profitable* ſupport.

3. *But yet*, more but's yet? *aye and yet: alas my heart is not in a poſture fit for the enjoyment of God; there ſhould be ſome ſuitableneſs in the ſubject for ſo great a priviledge, but alas I am——I know not what I am, I am every way worſe than you can imagine me to be.*

To this, if I ſhould give the anſwer wherewith 'tis ſaid, ſome body confuted *Bellarmine*, in ſaying, *Bellarmine thou lieſt*: perhaps this anſwer would be remembred longer than a *fine* one. And 'tis your profit my ſoul deſires. God knows, I had rather any *one*, though the meaneſt in the Congregation ſhould ſay the Sermon did me good, than that *every one* ſhould ſay, 'twas a good Sermon. Well then, take this rude anſwer, *Thou!*--- and pray obſerve how I demonſtrate it. If thou doſt not believe thy ſelf in what thou ſayeſt, then thy complaint is an *hypocritical* untruth; for to ſay thus of thy ſelf, in *proud humility is baſe hypocriſie*. If thou doeſt think as thou ſpeakeſt, then 'tis a *comfortable* miſtake, and that which doth evidence height of grace; for thoſe that are *vileſt* in their own eyes, are perſons in whom God delighteth. You never read in Scripture of any that beſpattered himſelf as *Paul* did,

did: but are not those passages his *beauty-spots*? had *Paul* ever the less Communion with God for all that? Thou that *lickest the dust of Gods feet*, he will take thee into his armes, and lay thee in his bosom. And whence hast thou at present thy *constant support*? whence hast thy (though but seldom) *revivings*? is it not God that *upholds thy soul in life*? art thou not hid in the *secret of his presence*? well then, *Psal.* 27. 14. *Wait on the Lord, be of good conrage, he shall strengthen thy heart*; *waite I say on the Lord.*

To speak all in a word; I have endeavoured to bring you unto God, and there I would leave you.

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*FINIS*

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*Pack Maior,*

Thursday the 27. of *March*, 1655.

ORdered that Dr. *Annesley* be desired from this Court to print his Sermon at *Pauls*, on the last Lords-day, together with his former Sermon there the last year.

SADLER.